

IN THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the present application:

1-28. (Canceled)

29. (New) A method comprising:

using a first agent to scan a first subset of a hierarchical structure of data maintained by a storage server, to collect information about the first subset; using a second agent to scan a second subset of the hierarchical structure of data maintained by the storage server, to collect information about the second subset; storing the information about the first subset and the information about the second subset in a physical storage facility which is accessible by an application for display to a user.

30. (New) The method of claim 29, wherein the hierarchical structure of data is a directory structure of data stored by the storage server.

31. (New) The method of claim 29, wherein the first agent uses a first file system and the second agent uses a second file system which is different from the first file system.

32. (New) The method of claim 31, wherein the first file system comprises a network file system (NFS) and the second file system comprises a common Internet file system (CIFS).

33. (New) The method of claim 31, wherein said storing comprises storing the information about the first subset and the information about the second subset in the same format.

34. (New) The method of claim 33, wherein said format is a non-file-system-specific format.

35. (New) The method of claim 29, wherein said storing comprises storing the information about the first subset and the information about the second subset on a database server.

36. (New) The method of claim 29, wherein said storing comprises storing the information about the first subset in a first table and storing the information about the second subset in a second table.

37. (New) The method of claim 29, wherein said storing comprises storing the information about the first subset and the information about the second subset in a single table.

38. (New) The method of claim 29, wherein said storing comprises storing the information about the first subset and the information about the second subset in a histogram.

39. (New) A system comprising:

a storage server coupled to a volume of data, the storage server maintaining a directory structure of the volume;

a first agent coupled to the storage server, to scan a first subset of the directory structure of the volume to collect information about the first subset;

a second agent coupled to the storage server, to scan a second subset of the directory structure of the volume to collect information about the second subset; and

a database server coupled to the first agent and the second agent, to store the information about the first subset and the information about the second subset in a physical storage facility.

40. (New) The system of claim 39, further comprising:

a storage system management application coupled to the storage server and the first and second agents, to control the first and second agents.

41. (New) The system of claim 40, wherein the storage system management application generates a graphical user interface (GUI).

42. (New) The system of claim 39, wherein the database server stores the first and second information in a table.

43. (New) The system of claim 39, wherein the database server stores the first and the second information as a histogram.

44. (New) The system of claim 39, wherein the first agent uses a first file system and the second agent uses a second file system which is different from the first file system.

45. (New) The system of claim 44, wherein the database server stores the information about the first subset and the information about the second subset in the same format.

46. (New) The system of claim 44, wherein the database server stores the information about the first subset and the information about the second subset in a non-file-system-specific format.

47. (New) The system of claim 39, wherein the first file system comprises a network file system (NFS) and the second file system comprises a common Internet file system (CIFS).

48. (New) A system comprising:

- a storage server to maintain a volume of data, including to maintain a directory structure of the volume of data;
- a first agent which uses a first file system, to scan a first subset of the directory structure of the volume to collect information about the first subset;
- a second agent which uses a second file system different from the first file system, to scan a second subset of the directory structure of the volume to collect information about the second subset;
- a storage facility coupled to the first agent and the second agent, to store the information about the first subset and the information about the second subset in the same format; and
- a management application coupled to the storage server and the first and second agents, to control the first and second agents.

49. (New) The system of claim 48, wherein said format is a non-file-system-specific format.

50. (New) The system of claim 48, wherein the first file system comprises a network file system (NFS) and the second file system comprises a common Internet file system (CIFS).

51. (New) The system of claim 48, further comprising:  
a database server to maintain the storage facility.

52. (New) The system of claim 48, wherein the management application generates a graphical user interface (GUI).

53. (New) The system of claim 48, wherein the database server stores the first and second information in at least one table.

54. (New) The system of claim 48, wherein the database server stores the first and second information as at least one histogram.